

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 03115 081838Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----020006 081838Z /41
O 081602Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1739

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 3115

STADIS//////////

EXDIS

NEA/INR FOR SAUNDERS FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PEPR, US, XF, IS
SUBJECT: BEGIN TRIP TO WASHINGTON

REF: (A) STATE 56251 (PARA 2); (B) TEL AVIV 3000

1. OUR RECENT MEETINGS WITH BEGIN AND DAYAN ONLY CONFIRM MY JUDGMENT IN REFTEL THAT BEGIN WILL BE COMING TO REGAIN PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT FOR HIS PEACE PLAN, NOT TO MODIFY IT. HE SPECIFICALLY CONFIRMED THIS TO US LAST NIGHT AT THE FINAL SESSION WITH ROY-THOUGH HE MADE CLEAR HE WAS OPEN TO MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN OR THE U.S. SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE BALL IS IN OUR COURT, NOT HIS.

2. AS I SEE IT, BEGIN IS PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH UNDOING "THE DAMAGE" DONE BY SADAT'S VISIT, IN TERMS OF BOTH U.S. GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES AND PUBLIC OPINION. HE REMAINS AS CONVINCED AS EVER OF THE RIGHTNESS OF THE ISRAELI POSITION ON ALL THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS, AND WILL ATTEMPT TO CONVINCE THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 TEL AV 03115 081838Z

ADMINISTRATION AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO SHARE THAT VIEW. WE NOW SEE THAT THIS WILL BE AS TRUE OF THE 242 CONTROVERSY AS OF EVERYTHING ELSE. (BE SURE TO TRY TO GET THE SECRETARY AND THE WHITE HOUSE TO READ CAREFULLY ROY'S REPORT ON THE FINAL MEETING. JERUSALEM 692.) THE SETTING STRAIGHT OF "MISUNDERSTANDINGS" WILL ALSO REMAIN HIGH ON BEGIN'S LIST, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT

TO SETTLEMENTS.

3. DEPENDING ON WHAT HE HEARS FROM EZER, BEGIN WILL PROBABLY GO AFTER THE AIRCRAFT PACKAGE CONCEPT AND MAY WELL SEEK A COMMITMENT THAT SALES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ISRAEL WILL NOT BE LINKED TO SALES TO ARAB STATES IN THE FUTURE. HE WILL WANT TO IMPRESS ON THE PRESIDENT PERSONALLY THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH ISRAEL VIEWS THE F-15'S TO SAUDI ARABIA IN PARTICULAR. HE MAY HINT AT A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AIRCRAFT PACKAGE AND THE "WISDOM" OF RETAINING THE CURRENT ISRAELI SINAI PROPOSAL. IF, AFTER HIS RETURN TO ISRAELIN THE DECISION IS MADE FOR WHATEVER REASON TO MODIFY THE SINAI PROPOSAL, HE WILL WANT TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT HE HAD FOREWARNED THE PRESIDENT.

4. WHEN THE 242 ISSUE IS JOINED, BE SURE TO HAVE ALL THE RECORDS OF PRIOR MEETINGS WITH BEGIN AVAILABLE. HIS MAIN THEME WILL BE THAT HIS POSITION HAS BEEN CLEAR TO CARTER SINCE THEIR PRIVATE MEETING LAST JULY. HE WILL IMPLY THAT FOR US TO MAKE AN ISSUE OF OUR DIFFERING INTERPRETATIONS AT THIS MOMENT MUST BE THE RESULT OF SOME ULTERIOR MOTIVE; AND BEGS THE "REAL QUESTION" OF NEGOTIATING OVER HIS SELF-RULE PLAN.
LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV03115
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780104-0990
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780390/aaaacyrb.tel
Line Count: 86
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: bde70fcb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY, STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 56251, 78 TEL AVIV 3000
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3397934
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BEGIN TRIP TO WASHINGTON
TAGS: PEPR, OVIP, US, XF, IS, (BEGIN, MENAHEN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/bde70fcb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014